

## BOOK REVIEW

### A flora of the St. Lawrence basin

The new "Flore laurentienne" by Frère Marie-Victorin<sup>1</sup> (written in French) is a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the vascular flora of northeastern North America. It is a complete reference work for the region to which it applies. It does not pretend to be a complete treatise on the flora of Quebec, but merely of the southern quarter of this province, comprising the St. Lawrence basin. The territory of Ungava, Gaspé, and Anticosti are not included. A bibliography of the principal botanical works and periodicals essential to all workers on the flora of Quebec is given, together with a history of botanical activity in that province and discussions of the geologic history, physiography, and climate of the region. The province of Quebec is divided into 3 phytogeographic regions—the Arctic, the Hudsonian, and the Laurentian—and the last of these is further subdivided into 3 subregions, the Bouclier Precambrian, the Appalachian, and the St. Lawrence alluvial plain. Good keys are supplied to the families, genera, and species. Several specialists were consulted in groups where they are recognized authorities—Prat in the *Gramineae*, Gates in *Oenothera*, Wiegand in *Amelanchier*, Mackenzie in *Carex*, Lloyd in *Utricularia*, Bailey in *Rubus*, and Erlanson in *Rosa*. In the opinion of the reviewer, a few other groups should have been handled by recognized specialists, notably the *Scrophulariaceae*, *Polemoniaceae*, *Vacciniaceae*, *Boraginaceae*, and *Crataegus*.

In general the nomenclature used is up-to-date and in accordance with the International Rules, although in some cases there is a pronounced tendency toward "lumping" in regard to families and genera. Family and generic limits, however, are largely matters of personal opinion, on which taxonomists will probably always differ. The line drawings illustrate every genus and almost every species and are well chosen to illustrate only the essential characters which the user of this work will need in identifying an unknown plant. The number of

<sup>1</sup> "Flore laurentienne," by Frère Marie-Victorin, D. Sc. 917 pp., 22 maps, 2800 line drawings by Frère Alexandre, L. Sc. Imprimerie de La Salle, 949 Rue Côté, Montreal. 1935. \$5.

genera and species described and figured is as follows: pteridophytes—22 genera, 64 species; gymnosperms—8 genera, 13 species; dicotyledons—405 genera, 987 species; and monocotyledons—119 genera, 504 species. In addition 16 pteridophytes, 1 gymno-sperm, 264 dicotyledons, and 68 monocotyledons occurring in other parts of Quebec are mentioned. A 14-page glossary, an explanation of the abbreviations of authors' names, and a statistical table are included at the back of the book.

The reviewer is particularly pleased to note that Marie-Victorin has accepted the most recent discoveries regarding the identity of numerous eastern American plants formerly thought to be conspecific with European forms, but now found to be distinct. The common bracken is thus *Pteridium latiusculum* (not *aquilinum*), the lady-fern is *Athyrium angustum* (not *Filix-femina*), the rock polypody is *Polypodium virginianum* (not *vulgare*), the broad-leaved enchanters-nightshade is *Circaea latifolia* (not *lutetiana*) and the Canadian species is *C. canadensis* (not *intermedia*), the American liverleaf is *Hepatica americana* (not *triloba*), the red-berried elder is *Sambucus pubens* (not *racemosa*), the American cranberry-tree is *Viburnum americanum*\* (not *Opulus*), etc. The use of *Actaea pachypoda* for our common thick-pedicelled white baneberry (instead of *A. alba*) and of *Lycopodium flabelliforme* for our trailing Christmas-green (instead of *L. complanatum*) are also in accordance with most recent studies.

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\* Marie-Victorin is in error in his use of this binomial. *Viburnum americanum* Mill., as Dr. Blake has shown, is synonymous with *Hydrangea arborescens*. The correct name for the American cranberry-tree is *Viburnum trilobum* Marsh.